AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (currently amended) A method ~~for enabling a caller~~ to ~~locate~~ attempt communication with a called party ~~using a computer system~~ comprising:

determining two or more contacts associated with the called party from a contact list associating one or more contacts with each of a plurality of called parties;

determining a first contact method associated with a first contact of the two or more contacts, and a second contact method associated with a second contact of the two or more contacts;

~~providing a contact list manager (10) in which a called party can store a contact list (22) of two or more contacts; and upon receiving a request to locate a called party, referring to said contact list to automatically attempt to locate said called party, wherein said automatically attempt to locate said called party comprises:~~

automatically sending, ~~by said computer system,~~ a message ~~via a~~ using the first contact method to the first contact and automatically sending the message using the second contact method to the second contact ~~toward, at least, a person other than said called party, said first contact method associated with a contact in said contact list~~, said message requesting ~~location information regarding said~~ a contact method associated with the called party;

receiving a response to said message from ~~said person, said person being other than said caller~~ the first contact, said response indicating a ~~second~~ third contact method ~~, other than said first contact method, for attempting to reach~~ associated with said called party; and

automatically ~~processing the response to facilitate use of said~~ using the ~~second~~ third contact method to attempt to ~~reach~~ communicate with said called party.

2.   (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein said contact list ~~manager further~~ comprises:

one or more contact methods (22a)associated with for each contact; and one or more rules (24a) applicable associated with eachto contacts and or contact methods method, each of the one or more rules indicating one or more conditions for sending the messageregarding when or how to send a locator request.

3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein said first, second and third one or more contact methods comprise is one or more methods selected from the group consisting of:

one or more telephone numbers,

one or more fax numbers,

one or more pager numbers,

one or more cell phone numbers, and one or more e-mail addresses.

4. (currently amended) A method according to claim 2 wherein said contact list database stores additional associates contact information with said contacts or said contact methods, the contact information designating the conditions for usage of said contacts or said contact methods.

5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 2 wherein said automatically attempting to locate said called party comprises: automatically sending one or more messages to parties listed in a contact list requesting location information regarding said called party; receiving responses to said one or more messages and presenting a response to a calling party; and, further comprising: cancelling outstanding the message sent using the second contact method in response to themessages when a response is received response.

6. (cancelled)

3

7.   (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~6~~-1 further comprising: allowing a called party to configure said contact list.

8.   (canceled)

9.   (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~6~~1, further comprising:
    identifying ~~wherein a~~ the called party ~~is identified~~; and
    using the identity ~~ies of called parties are used in part~~ to determine system behavior.

10.   (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~6~~-1 wherein said called party may configure system behavior for a calling party.

11.   (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~6~~-1 wherein said message is ~~are~~ predetermined prior to determining the first contact ~~receiving said request~~.

12.   (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~6~~-1 wherein the ~~parties on the contact list may submit~~ responses ~~to said messages with~~ comprises information ~~regarding~~ associated with the called party.

13.   (cancelled)

14.   (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~6~~-1 wherein said messages may be automatically cancelled, expired or recalled based on a timer.

15.   (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~6~~-1 wherein said messages may be automatically cancelled, expired or recalled based on the successful establishment of ~~a~~ contact between said calling party and said called party.

16.   (currently amended) An apparatus to attempt communication with ~~for automatically locating~~ a called party comprising:

4

a contact list manager ~~(10) in which a called party can store~~comprising a list ~~(22)~~ associating one or more contacts with each of a plurality of called parties, the contact list manager to determine~~of~~ two or more contacts associated with the called party, to determine a first contact method associated with a first contact of the two or more contacts, and to determine a second contact method associated with a second contact of the two or more contacts; and

a ~~configuration interface (18);~~

_____ a locator to automatically send a message using the first contact method to the first contact, and to automatically send the message using the second contact method to the second contact, said message requesting a contact method associated with the called party, to receive a response to said message from the first contact, said response indicating a third contact method associated with said called party; and to automatically use the third contact method to attempt to communicate with said called party

~~(60) capable of sending out location-request messages, in response to invocation by a calling party who is seeking to locate said called party, and receiving and handling responses, wherein a response by a person other than said calling party, to a location-request message sent to a first destination (22a), indicates a second destination which is to be subsequently called to reach the called party, and said first and second destinations are of different multimedia types.~~

17.   (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 16 further comprising:
one or more contact lists ~~(22)~~ associated with one or more called parties; and
one or more rule sets ~~(24)~~ associated with the one or more called parties.

18.   (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 16 further comprising:
~~one or more~~a system ~~or group~~ contact lists ~~(12) providing~~ comprising contacts associated with~~that are applicable to~~ more than one called party; and
~~one or more~~a system ~~or group~~ rule sets ~~(14) applicable~~associated with~~to~~ more than one called party.

19.   (cancelled)

5

20.   (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 16 further comprising: a cancellation module (66) for determining ~~when~~ to cancel outstanding messages and to ~~sending~~ cancellation requests.

21.   (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein said ~~second~~ third contact method includes a telephone number ~~that is entered in full in response to said message by a responding party~~.

22.   (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein said second contact method includes a telephone number, and said first contact method includes an e-mail address.

23.   (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~wherein said automatically processing the response comprises~~ further comprising automatically extracting said ~~second~~ third contact method from said response.

24.   (currently amended) A method according to claim 23 wherein said first contact method and said second contact methods comprise ~~is a~~ telephone numbers, said ~~second~~ third contact method is a telephone number ~~spoken verbally by a responding party via telephone~~, and said automatically extracting said ~~second~~ third contact method from said response includes using speech recognition software to extract said ~~second~~ third contact method.

25.   (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~wherein said automatically processing the response comprises~~ further comprising automatically extracting said ~~second~~ third contact method using optical recognition software.

26.   (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein ~~said automatically processing~~ receiving the response comprises recording said response, and further comprising transmitting audio associated with the ~~second~~ third contact method ~~and playing the response for~~ to said caller.

6

27. (cancelled)

28. (canceled)

29. (currently amended) A method according to claim 6 1 ~~further comprising receiving a response to one of said messages, said one of said messages having been sent via a first contact method, said response including location information~~ including a second contact method having a number or address that is manually or verbally entered by a responding party to indicate location of said called party, wherein said first contact method and second third contact methods are of different multimedia types.

30. (currently amended) A method according to claim 29 wherein one of said first and second contact methods is a telephone ~~call~~ number and ~~another~~ the other of said first and second contact methods is a text-based ~~messaging~~ message.

31. (cancelled)

32. (cancelled)

33. (cancelled)

34. (cancelled)

35. (cancelled)

7